

of civilization he had penetrated. He had changed his name. Morose, unsocial, he chummed with nobody, and kept away from drink because it had parted him from Beulah.

One day his fine face and athletic frame had struck the eye of an officer in the mounted police. The official made overtures to him, and the man who sought only to bury himself far from the maddening crowd, accepted the post at which his true courage would never falter or quail.

He made only one restriction: that he be placed at the remotest post in the service, and thus had come about the isolation at Mile Post 24.

"Here to live and die," he told himself amid the fearful solitude. "The sooner the bullet of some vicious desperado or revengeful Indian meets me, the better!"

So he had entombed his past and his identity. He returned from that solemn, scoreful ceremony to resume his duties, a dangerous man to trifle with.

The discipline of the post embraced a daily tour of a district 25 miles wide. There was one lonely trail to guard. It was the next morning that he espied a figure toiling up the rugged mountain path. As it neared him he made out a wiry, ferret-faced half-breed.

"What is it?" he challenged as the man halted ten feet away from the cabin, and his carbine ready, he advanced upon the visitor, felt over his clothing, found no weapons, and motioned him towards the cabin with the grudging words:

"Hungry, I suppose?"

"Yes—first," grinned the Indian.

"Then I tell you something. It is Red Roger."

"Ha! what of him?" demanded Gerald, spurring up magically, for the name was that of a fugitive desperado long sought for and for whose capture a great reward was offered.

"I have him."

"You have him?" retorted Gerald incredulously. "What do you mean?"

"I take you—but you pay me."

"Yes, half the reward," agreed Gerald readily.

"We go on foot. He is sick, but you know him a bad man. Give me a pistol, too. Then, if we fight, I help."

Gerald let his visitor eat his fill. Then he went to his chest and selected an extra revolver. A sudden thought, a suspicion, repugnance towards the treacherous class the half-breed represented, caused him to reflect. Finally, however, he handed the weapon to his visitor. The eyes of the latter glowed as he placed it inside his coat.

It was after an hour of rough piloting that the half-breed neared an old shack, moved open its door and revealed a man lying on a heap of skins. He gave Gerald a push. Then came a rapid, startling sensation. The half-breed had flung the revolver Gerald had given him directly into the lap of the recumbent man. Quick as a flash, the outlaw, for at once Gerald recognized him, leveled the revolver at his head.

"Hands up!" he ordered, and Gerald obeyed. "You know me. It is to see me crippled, dying, that you of the cursed mounted police have found me! It is this witless half-breed I have bribed to snare you hither, that I may wipe out my hatred of those who have hunted me to this, with one sure shot!"

"Snap!"

"The weapon is empty—I saw to that," pronounced Gerald calmly, producing his weapon, and then with a yell the half-breed dashed for the door and away as he saw his scheme upset.

Within ten minutes the frantic, cursing outlaw was handcuffed and bodily carried by Gerald to the station. Within an hour, propped across the saddle, he was being borne toward Moreton.

There came to Gerald a temptation on that long, tiresome journey over the hills. The outlaw had a bottle of